

R4 Relationship Assessment of Fish/Wildlife Management and Recreation

Presentation to Recreation and
Socioeconomic Workgroup 5/20/04



Oroville Facilities Relicensing

FERC Project No. 2100

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2004

Introduction

- Need for the Study
- Study Objectives
- Methodology
- Habitat / Fishing Opportunities
- Recommendations
- Questions



Need For the Study

- FERC requires a comprehensive recreation management plan
- This study contributes to recreation planning by providing information related to recreation and fish and wildlife management
- A condition of DWR's FERC license requires DWR to meet the needs for fish and wildlife enhancements in conjunction with the Oroville Facilities

Study Objectives

The objectives of this study are to:

- Identify the effects of fish and wildlife management on providing recreational opportunities within the study area
- Describe the range of current fish- and wildlife-related recreational opportunities available in the study area

Methodology

This study incorporates:

- A review of existing management plans, laws, codes, agreements, and reports
- Interviews with study area land managers, and stakeholders
- Recreation survey results
- Site visits

Habitat

The Oroville Facilities offer large areas of habitat consisting of:

- Lacustrine
- Blue oak–foothill pine
- Sierran mixed conifer
- Ponderosa pine
- Montane hardwood habitats



Habitat

OWA wildlife habitat consists primarily of:

- Valley/foothill riparian
- Annual grassland
- Riverine
- Lacustrine (lake-type) habitats



Fishing Opportunities

- Various bank and boat fishing opportunities throughout the study area including
 - LOSRA water bodies
 - Thermalito Afterbay
 - Low Flow Channel
 - Warm-water ponds in the OWA
- Feather River Fish Hatchery (stocking)

Issues Related to Fish and Wildlife Management

- Management Agency Structure
- Management Plans
- Staffing and Funding
- Existing Facilities



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Recommendations

- Law Enforcement
- Visitor Use Levels
- Land Uses
- Public Access
- Fish and Wildlife Habitat
- Water Levels and Flow



Management Agency Structure

Issues:

- Compartmentalization leading to gaps/overlaps in management direction (study area)
- Lack of programs for particular locations (study area)
- DFG has jurisdiction over OWA while DWR has ownership (OWA)
- Lack of wildlife specific regulation and monitoring of visitor uses (OWA)

Management Agency Structure (Potential Management Actions)

- Coordinate inter-agency management directions:
 - Programmatic agreements
 - Agency coordination meetings
 - Develop MOA
- Consider transfer of management of OWA to DPR or FRRPD
- Develop and implement wildlife recreation monitoring plan

Management Plans

Issues:

- Current management plans are outdated (OWA and LOSRA)
- Lack of comprehensive, plan for study area (study area)
- Current plans not fully implemented (study area)

Management Plans (Potential Management Actions)

- Create or Update Management Plans
- Comprehensive Study Area Goals
- Monitoring
- Adaptive Management



Staffing and Funding

Issue:

- DFG has limited budget and limited resources for fish and wildlife management in the OWA



Staffing and Funding

(Potential Management Actions)

- Request commensurate funding between State Wildlife Areas
- Pursue Federal, State, and private grants
- Increase or establish fees for the most popular activities and facilities
- Engage volunteers to provide some services

Existing Facilities

Issue:

- Some survey respondents (anglers and hunters) stated a desire for additional facilities and more frequent maintenance (OWA and LOSRA)



Existing Facilities (Potential Management Actions)

- Maintain existing facilities in fully functional condition
- Develop additional facilities as appropriate
- Consider contracting or working with volunteers to address waste management issues



Law Enforcement

Issues:

- Unauthorized/undesireable activity (study area)
- Patrols are too infrequent in the OWA



Law Enforcement

(Potential Management Actions)

- Provide additional signage regarding allowable uses and times
- Increase patrols and staffing to reduce illegal hunting and fishing, crime, or other undesirable activities
- Provide a hotline for law enforcement reporting
- Develop a volunteer program to increase self-policing

Visitor Use Levels

Issues:

- Increased use levels may not be compatible with State Wildlife Area goals (OWA)
- Funding level low compared to level of use (OWA)
- Risk factors associated with encounters between anglers and PWC users; also noted between hunters (OWA and LOSRA)

Visitor Use Levels (Potential Management Actions)

- Develop systematic and consistent monitoring program
- Increase fees to generate additional revenue
- Consider providing additional hunting lands, if available



Land Uses

Issues:

- Uses within the OWA (motor boating and mining) conflict with regulations



Land Uses

(Potential Management Actions)

- Replace existing signage and provide additional signage regarding acceptable and unacceptable uses
- Amend regulations to allow conflicting uses OR discourage land uses and visitor activities inconsistent with regulations
- Transfer management responsibility for the OWA from DFG to DPR or FRRPD

Public Access

Issues:

- Deferred maintenance on access roads, trails and boat launches (OWA and LOSRA)
- Restricted entry times results in less access for anglers and hunters (OWA)
- Additional access points may be needed (OWA)
- Some signage is conflicting (OWA and LOSRA)

Public Access (Potential Management Actions)

- Manage access roads and boat launches and repair to support desired use levels
- Increase the hours that the OWA is available to anglers and hunters



Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Issues:

- Fish and wildlife habitat improvement are needed (OWA and LOSRA)
- A reduction in cover has resulted in loss of spawning and nursery habitat (OWA and LOSRA)
- The prevalence of water primrose has negatively impacted habitat for warm-water fish and waterfowl (OWA)

Fish and Wildlife Habitat (Potential Management Actions)

- Continue habitat improvement programs throughout the study area while maintaining coordination between management agencies
- Develop best management practices to address water primrose removal, including working with volunteer groups to remove plants

Water Levels and Flow

Issue:

- Some survey respondents stated changes in water elevation and river flows impacted their visit (OWA and LOSRA)



Water Levels and Flow (Potential Management Actions)

- Continue habitat enhancement
- Inform public of operational constraints due to flood control and water supply needs



Questions

- Any Questions?



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